

Catching the bus to school

Parent's FAQs

How do I get a bus pass for my child? For most students a Kent County Council Travel Saver bus pass will be the best value option. Parents can order a KCC Travel Saver on the KCC website from June onwards (applications received after 31 July may delay delivery of the pass). Travel Saver passes are usually delivered to the school from where they can be collected by your child on the first day of term. By purchasing and using the pass, your child is agreeing to follow KCC's code of conduct which can be found on their website.

When can my child use a KCC Travel Saver Pass? A KCC Travel Saver is valid from 6am to 7pm on Mondays to Fridays between September and the end of July. However, at Stagecoach we want to encourage young people to get out and about independently – whether it's for studying late at school, seeing friends or getting into town – so we accept Travel Saver passes at all times on our buses, including during the summer holidays, at no extra cost.

Is there an alternative to the KCC Travel Saver? In most cases the KCC Travel Saver will offer a significant saving over buying single, day or period tickets. However, Stagecoach offers a range of tickets to suit various travel requirements. These include single and return fares (about half price for children under the age of 16), day tickets called 'DayRider U19' (available for anyone aged 18 or under) and period tickets called 'MegaRider'. DayRider and MegaRider tickets can be purchased from the driver onboard the bus or as a mobile ticket on the Stagecoach Bus App. MegaRider tickets can be loaded on to a StagecoachSmart card and purchased from our website. Information about our ticket options can be found here> www.stagecoachbus.com/tickets

How much is a KCC Travel Saver Pass? KCC will confirm pass prices for the upcoming academic year in June. For 2022-23, under 16 passes cost £450 each and 16+ passes cost £500. It is likely that KCC will increase these prices for the 2023-24 academic year. The amount can be paid in full or by instalment.

Can I get any further discount? Families with three or more children can get a third and further additional passes free of charge. Young carers or children in care may qualify for a free pass. Details can be found on the KCC website> www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/school-transport/KCC-travel-saver

Is my child entitled to free bus travel? Your child may be entitled to receive free school travel if they live more than 3 miles away from the nearest appropriate school. Information on Entitled Scholar passes is available on the KCC website here> www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/school-transport/free-school-transport

Does my child need to carry their pass every day? Yes. It is important that they have their pass or a valid ticket with them as they will need it every time they board the bus. Apart from during the first week of the autumn term, students who do not have a valid pass or ticket will be required to pay a fare.

What happens if my child loses their bus pass? If they have a KCC Travel Saver pass they can request a replacement online. KCC will charge an admin fee.

What happens if my child forgets their bus pass? Apart from during the first week of the autumn term, students who cannot show the driver their bus pass when boarding the bus will be required to pay a fare for their journey.

Can my child pay by cash on the bus? Yes. We also accept contactless card payments, Apple Pay and Google Pay. Please be aware that we do not accept top-up payment cards such as Go-Henry.

Which bus should my child catch? We operate a comprehensive network of bus routes around the county. Some bus routes extend to and from specific schools and operate at school-times. If your child's school does not have a direct bus they will usually need to change bus in the town or city centre. Your child is not guaranteed a seat on any particular bus, so it is important that they are aware of all the available travel options. Use our online journey planner to find the most suitable bus to catch> www.stagecoachbus.com/plan-a-journey

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When will the bus arrive? Students and parents can track a bus on a live map on the Stagecoach Bus App. The app is handy to use and has all you need in one place. Find out more about our app here> www.stagecoachbus.com/app

What should my child do if they miss their bus? We recommend that students alert a parent/carer and/or the school if they have missed their bus and they expect to be late. Students can check our website or the Stagecoach Bus App to find when the next bus is due, or an alternative bus.

What should my child do if the bus doesn't arrive? We recommend students check our Twitter account @StagecoachSE to see live updates about cancelled or delayed services. This should be done before checking when the next bus is available. If they are on their way to school they should contact a parent/carer and/or the school to notify them that their bus hasn't arrived. If a bus hasn't shown up on their way home from school we encourage students to alert a member of staff at the school and check our website or the Stagecoach Bus App to find when the next bus is due, or an alternative bus.

What should my child do if they don't know where to get off the bus? We encourage parents to help familiarise their child with the bus journey before the start of term by travelling with them on the bus. If your child is unsure where to get off the bus they can ask the driver who will do their best to help. If your child has a question, please wait until the bus is at a bus stop. Don't speak to the driver whilst they are driving, unless it is an emergency.

How can my child stay safe onboard the bus? Buses are allocated to cater for large numbers of school children at school-times. We expect students to use all available seats and if necessary to stand only in the designated saloon area on the lower deck. All our buses are equipped with CCTV cameras. Any anti-social behaviour is recorded and shared with the school to identify individuals. Our drivers are responsible for the safe operation of the bus. Whilst they will do everything they reasonably can to control the behaviour of passengers onboard, they cannot be held responsible for their conduct.

What should my child do if there are no available seats? We expect students to use all available seats, but if no seats are available they must stand only in the designated saloon area on the lower deck and hold onto a handrail.

Can my child take their bike or scooter on board the bus? Folding bicycles and scooters, safely and securely stowed in the designated luggage area, may be carried on all our buses if there is space for them. They must not be carried onto the upper deck on double deck buses. E-scooters that are reasonably clean, free of mud on the wheels and folded, may be carried on our buses if securely stowed, at the discretion of the bus driver.

Can my child eat or drink on the bus? We ask that school children do not consume food or drink while travelling on the bus. We like to ensure that our buses are kept clean and tidy for the benefit of all our customers.

Are there litter bins on the bus? We do not have litter bins on board our buses. Any litter should be taken home and not left on our buses.

Where can I find further information about bus travel to and from school? We know how nerve-wracking catching the bus to school can be, so we have produced a helpful video all about it> www.stagecoachbus.com/promos-and-offers/south-east/kent-school-buses You can also find further information on this webpage.